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Review of Radical Candor: How to Be a Kick-Axx Boss without Losing your Humanity, by K. Scott

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of business and sustainability (chap. 2), the authors move to employee rights (chap. 3), discrimination (chap. 4), product safety and quality (chap. 5), IT and privacy issues (chap. 6), marketing (chap. 7), whistleblowing (chap. 8) and accounting fraud (chap. 9), international challenges to business ethics (chap. 10), and the role of the Christian in the workplace (chap. 11). The authors also include an appendix, “Divine help for individuals seeking God in a sinful world,” which serves as a theological and devotional reminder of the basics of Christianity—revelation, prayer, church, etc.—and its role in centering our lives on God. Chapter 11, taken with this appendix, should be required readings in *all* Christian colleges seeking to create a strong moral character in their Christian professionals. I was inspired by these two chapters to deepen the moral preparation of the Christian students I work with in my university training. These will be useful in fields even outside of business—health, education, engineering, and more.

Those who want more details in an ethics book may want to check out other texts, including Craig Johnson’s classic *Meeting the Ethical Challenge of Leadership* (now in its 6th edition). That book is much larger and can provide a detailed review of much research. Coupled with *Honorable in Business*, Johnson’s book would make an excellent combination for business ethics and leadership ethics courses.

I believe this book creates an inspiring vision of doing business from a Christian framework. It also creates a joyful view of ethics. One is not left with the feeling we *must* be ethical because it is the Christian way but inspired by affirmative proof that individuals who bring their Christianity into business will see the power of doing business in a new and

lively way. Businesses where love, mercy, and justice excel make business exciting and honorable and are sure to flourish.

We all need such a powerful reminder of the positivity of morality, especially in business. As such, I highly recommend this book.

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RADICAL CANDOR: HOW TO BE A KICK-ASS BOSS WITHOUT LOSING YOUR HUMANITY

By K. Scott
New York, NY: St. Martin’s Press
(2017)
Kindle edition

Reviewed by SCOTT MOORE

St. Martin’s Press and Kim Scott have given us the challenge to become more direct in our communications to avoid frustration and become more productive as a team. The ultimate goal of *Radical Candor* is to collaboratively achieve what you cannot achieve as an individual (loc. 1506). For this collaboration to occur, there must be a high level of trust within the team (loc. 349).

Radical Candor is divided into two segments. The first segment discusses Scott’s 25 years of work experiences, both successes and failures, as is built into the concept of *Radical Candor*. The second section builds on the first, enabling leaders to incorporate the first section’s core ideas into the workplace.

The title of the book encapsulates its contents. Scott defines the title, stating that “radical” was chosen because “so many of us are condi-

tioned to avoid saying what we really think” (loc. 349). The tendency to avoid is an adaptive social behavior that helps individuals avoid conflict and embarrassment; however, in a boss, this “kind of avoidance is disastrous” (loc. 349). “Candor” was used because the “key to getting everyone used to being direct when challenging each other (and you!) is emphasizing that it’s necessary to communicate clearly enough so that there’s no room for interpretation” (loc. 348). Scott emphasizes that without radical candor, the openness necessary for a company to maximize their employee’s potential is limited.

Scott expressly communicates that each member should be in roles that enable their personal life goals to be met for a team to reach its full potential. For this to happen, there must be recognition of each employee’s ambition. This can be best gained by a relationship beyond what you, as the manager, wants to get out of the person, into an understanding of what the team member wants to get out of life. When the team member’s life and work goals intersect, there is fulfillment for the team member, and both the employer and team member get the most out of their relationship. In this context, Scott suggests that shifting “from a traditional ‘talent management’ mindset to one of ‘growth management’ will help you ensure that everyone on your team is moving in the direction of their dreams, ensuring that your team collectively improves over time” (loc. 1026). The manager’s job is not to provide meaning for team members but to get to know them well enough to decipher how they get meaning from their work, thus placing them in positions most apt to fulfill them as a whole person.

Radical Candor has much to offer the Christian leadership community.

Scott draws out principles that, if applied, will be an asset for Christian leaders who are striving for excellence in both their product output and their team member’s wellbeing. The Bible says that we should consider the needs of others and ourselves (Phil. 2:4). This biblical concept finds its fulfillment in the “growth management” aspect of the book. Additionally, the collaborative approach described in the book appeals to many levels of leadership. While I would like to have seen the author apply these principles in a volunteer-type organization, the book was written plainly enough, and the principles were delineated sufficiently well for a leader of volunteers to understand and incorporate them into their leadership style.

The principles found within the book are easily applied to a church setting due to the lack of “manager” focus and the thrust of “people focus.” The book’s trajectory was to foster an environment of openness and candid expression among individuals who work with each other. These principles can be applied in a church setting, thereby enabling an atmosphere that has the potential to be less judgmental and more seeker friendly.

The language used within the book to enhance the author’s emphasis may be a weakness in writing for the Christian reader. The title itself gives the impression of an “in your face” read, and that is where the book’s radical candor is shown. Saying what needs to be said is a must. The essential principles found in *Radical Candor* foster a collaborative effort to maximize an organization’s potential—secular or religious.

I would recommend *Radical Candor* to anyone ready for a collaborative, radical, and candid leadership approach that enables team members

to achieve and exceed their own personal career goals.

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ETHICAL LEADERSHIP: A PRIMER

*By Robert M. McManus, Stanley J. Ward, and Alexandra K. Perry
Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar
Publishing (2018)
Paperback*

Reviewed by MARCELO FALCONIER

Ethical Leadership: A Primer addresses an issue that typically manifests in two very different fields: leadership and ethics, with leadership tending to be studied from a more practical perspective, and ethics by humanities and philosophy. These fields are historically disconnected and thus attract different readers. The editors argue the need to connect both topics as leadership is not neutral, and ethical leadership requires awareness of the frames we are using for evaluation and decision-making. This book requires a change in thinking for readers who come from traditional leadership and organizations, since some areas of the first sections in the book are quite philosophical. For students and professors in humanities and philosophy, the book may seem plain and sometimes oversimplified. However, it can be found useful as an attempt to explain philosophical topics to readers more concerned with practical issues. The relevance is found in the plain language, the cases and examples from real life, and the permanent connection to leadership.

In the introduction, the editors explain their approach to leadership

using the Five Components Model introduced by Gama Perruci and developed by McManus and Perruci. To the more common elements of analysis—such as the leader, the follower and the goal—they add context and culture as crucial factors. As a South American professor, I find these additions appropriate after witnessing the failure of the extrapolation of many models that were successful in some companies but that did not consider the weight of cultural values and context.

The book is divided into two sections. The first is focused on ethics, and the second is centered on leadership. Nevertheless, the sections are well connected. The first is better connected than the second, addressing the Five Components Model case study in each chapter to connect the main ethical concepts.

One might disagree with the selection of the topics in the section on ethics; however, the selections address a wide range of ethical positions, especially those that influence more individuals' choices in this area of the world. It starts by addressing two contrasting perspectives such as Kant and utilitarianism. This contrasting strategy is repeated in the next chapters. From there, the authors cover what they called virtue ethics and ethical egoism. The proportion dedicated to Ayn Rand may very well be justified due to her influence in the business environment. The chapter on universal ethics addresses contemporary social approaches and is, again, followed by a chapter on cultural relativism. The divine command theory would be one of the most controversial chapters, not only for the inclusion of religion in the scenario but for the inevitable bias on an approach by which many Christians will not feel adequately represented. However,